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RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/ISA/AP/ES//  
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RHEHNSC/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 001235

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR EAP/MLS, EAP/EP, EAP/RSP, EAP/PD, OES/PCI  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE, G/ENV  
STATE PASS TO EPA/OIA (DENNIS CUNNINGHAM AND MARK KASMAN)  
STATE PASS TO EPA/ORD (KEVIN TEICHMAN)  
STATE PASS TO OGHA/HHS (STIEGER/VALDEZ/HICKEY)  
CDC FOR OGHA (BLOUT/MCCALL) AND NCEH (THOMAS SINKS)  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (TSHUBERT AND WVANHOUTEN)  
HHS PASS TO FIC/NIH (GLASS) AND NIEHS/NIH (DAVID SCHWARTZ)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [TBIO](#) [KPAO](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: Second Joint Advisory Committee on Agent Orange Dioxin

¶1. (U) Summary. Post plans to convene the second Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) on August 14, 2007, co-hosted by Office 33 of the Government of Vietnam (GVN). As agreed by the USG and the GVN, the JAC serves as a technical forum to enhance scientific coordination and cooperation between the United States and Vietnam on the environmental and health activities of dioxin. Participation in this JAC will parallel that of the U.S. delegation to the first meeting, which was held June 6, 2006. End Summary.

#### History of JAC

¶3. (U) A memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed March 10, 2002 in Hanoi following the meeting "Vietnam-U.S. Scientific Conference Joint on Human Health and Environmental Effects of Agent Orange/Dioxin" led to the establishment of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC). The first meeting was held on June 6, 2006 in Hanoi. That meeting focused on technical exchange for environmental and health research, but also served to document achievements, collaborative relationships and potential avenues for progress. After successfully holding their first meeting, the two sides agreed that the exchange was useful and should be continued on an annual basis. The four years that elapsed between the signing of the MOU and the first JAC was due primarily to the GVN's failure to name delegation members.

¶4. (U) Post proposes holding the second annual meeting of the JAC on August 14. This timing suits the desires of Office 33 and fits the schedules of several U.S.-based participants, who will be in Hanoi on other business. All sides anticipate that this meeting will involve another technical exchange, focused on on-going activities. Our Vietnamese counterparts understand that the JAC is not a forum for policy decisions with regard to future USG activities with regard to the Agent Orange/Dioxin.

#### Ongoing Technical Exchanges

¶4. (SBU) A number of other channels for technical exchanges exist in addition to the JAC. In March 2002, the USG sponsored a conference in Hanoi (which generated the JAC), bringing together approximately 400 U.S. and Vietnamese scientists to discuss research on the effects of AO and dioxin on human health and the environment. From 2002 to 2006, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and

EPA implemented a joint project to enhance technical abilities of GVN scientists, evaluate the extent of dioxin contamination at the Danang Airport, evaluate low-cost soil sampling, and share information on remediation technologies for locations where both sides agree there is a high probability of off-site dioxin contamination.

15. (SBU) In August 2005, the Department of Defense (DOD) sponsored a technical workshop entitled "Methods for Stabilizing and Cleaning-up Dioxin Contaminated Sites." In October 2006 and February 2007, workshops were held in Hanoi that addressed interdiction strategies that capitalized on a joint State Department and EPA technical assistance project in partnership with the Ford Foundation, Ministry of Defense (MOD) and GVN's Office 33. In April, seven officials from MOD and Office 33 specializing in chemical engineering and toxicology participated in a study tour to New York, New Jersey and Washington DC for meetings with EPA, UNDP, non-governmental organizations, universities and others. In June, MOD and DOD co-hosted an exchange of technical information on Operation Ranch Hand and shared information important for the refinement of a remediation strategy. That two-day technical workshop was followed by a State-Office 33 joint scientific workshop highlighting research undertaken on the ecological fate of dioxin at Elgin Air Force Base, Florida.

16. (SBU) In August, the EPA will host a "Worker Health and Safety Training" (classroom and field practicum) for MOD construction workers and Vietnam Institute for Occupational Health and Personal Protection (VIOHP). The JAC meeting will be held at the time of this August workshop, in large part to reduce costs for Washington-based participants.

17. (SBU) The GVN sees these workshops and the planned JAC in August

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as consistent with the November 2006 Joint Statement of President George W. Bush and President Nguyen Minh Triet, in which the two leaders agreed that further joint efforts to address the environmental contamination near former dioxin storage sites would make a valuable contribution to the continued development of their bilateral relationship, and discussions between the two Presidents in Washington DC in June, 2007.

#### Draft Agenda and U.S. JAC Membership

18. (SBU) This draft agenda is in the process of being vetted with GVN's Office 33 and USG partner agencies (DOD, EPA, HHS, and USAID).

- a. Opening Ceremony
- b. Brief history of technical cooperation
- c. Joint GVN-U.S. technical accomplishments on environment issues
- d. Joint GVN-U.S. technical attempts on health issues
- e. Establishing overall technical principals
- f. Establishing a technical planning framework on environmental issues
- g. Exploring a technical framework on health issues
- h. Coordination issues with other partners
- i. Next steps
- j. Signing of the minutes
- k. Press conference

19. (SBU) The U.S. JAC members are

- a. Embassy Defense Attach - Colonel Mark Chakwin
- b. Embassy Health Attach - Captain Michael Iademarco, USPHS and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - Dr. Marie Sweeney, alternate for this meeting
- c. Embassy Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Officer - Mr. Nathan Sage
- d. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Dr. Kevin Yale Teichman, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Research and Development for Science; and,
- e. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-Dr. Thomas Sinks, Deputy Director, National Center for Environmental Health and

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

MARINE